

Fifteenth Sunday of Ordinary Time

Cycle A

9-10 July 2011

Rev. Mr. Steven Roth

Walking through the mall recently I observed a mother and teenage daughter arguing with one another. As I passed by I heard the Mom say to her daughter, “Cara, its not all about you all the time.” At that moment, those words just caused me to think about all that parents of teenagers go through and what a blessing celibacy is. But surprisingly those words, “its not all about you” returned to my mind as I prayed over this morning’s reading.

We are all very familiar with this gospel story. Most likely we heard many times how our hearts are like the different soils mentioned in the gospel and that it is reflective of how we respond to God. Yet, I think if we limit our appreciation of the gospel to this perspective we lose the true core of this message because it really is not all about us. It is about God!

The very title, the parable of the Sower, highlights for us that it is the sower that is the focus of this parable not the soil. Jesus tells us this parable to reveal something about God. Consider what we would think to be a good sower, or in our terms, a farmer. A farmer would be very selective in only planting seeds in places that he is most certain he can expect a rich harvest. If by mistake, the farmer plants in an area that does not produce he would never plant there again.

But the sower that Jesus describes spreads his seed over all types of ground, without caution or hesitation. This sower plants everywhere! Throwing seed on the fertile ground, throwing seed on shallow ground, even rocky ground. And so too is Jesus inviting us to realize that God does the same.

The sower/God plants this way because he plants according to His love for us. The seed that God sows is offered to us freely, without condition because God never limits or qualifies His love for us. God offers us His love when we are open to him in our lives. God offers us His love when we are open to Him just when things are going our way. God even offers us His love when we are closed to Him, when we are selfish, unkind or insensitive to others. In each of these moments, God continues to try to sow, to offer His love in our lives.

So in God’s eyes, it is all about us. As His sons and daughters we are His focus. As a sower, we can understand His love for us to be so strong that nothing holds Him back from offering His love, even when it seems we won’t respond to Him, He nonetheless still shares Himself with us. At every moment, God offers His love for us. This is not something that happened in the past or will happen in the future. From the beginning of time until the end, God offers His love for us, trying to plant it deep within us. Today, this very day, God has offered to plant His Words of love deep in our hearts. We respond thanks be to God, Praise to You Lord Jesus Christ at the end of our scriptures as a reminder to us that every time the scripture is proclaimed, God is offering His love for us and so we give thanks.

But maybe today is a good time to see how we have received this great sower in our lives? We do this not simply by seeing whether we can recall the scriptures that were just read. While this is important, we need to go deeper beyond a mere academic exercise of memory. The way we can truly see how we have responded to the great Sower is by how we live and act as we go out those doors. Do we walk out the

same way we came in...our lives unchanged and unmoved? Or do we leave a bit different. Are our lives moved around a bit, the soil of our lives cultivated that we feel God's love in a deeper way but also a sense of challenge, to do better, do more or change some choices in our lives. Then and only then do we know we have responded to the Sower.

Thank be to God then that it is all about us, that He never grows tired or weary of planting His love in our lives. Imagine if He was different, if He was a sower that stopped planting after the first time growth did not spring up. Where would we be?